

Front Page Edit Page Other Page

Date:

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Worcester Native Named to Head USIA Student Center in Saigon

By BILLINGS B. KINGSBURY
Telegram Staff Reporter.

A Worcester native and former area teacher will become director in December of a large cultural center of the United States Information Agency in South Viet Nam.

Walter E. Wells, who returned last month from four years of teaching in Italy, will leave Dec. 6 to head the Vietnamese-American Association, a 6,000-student "brynational center" run by the USIA in Saigon.

Teach English

The center offers multiple cultural and educational activities, most important of which is teaching English. Wells said 180 Americans teach English there.

Wells is a brother of City Councillor George A. Wells and State Police Detective Lt. William F. Wells of the state fire marshal's office.

After Army service in Italy during World War II, Wells was graduated in 1950 from Clark University and taught in West Boylston and Barre before receiving a master in education degree from Worcester State Teachers College.

He has done graduate study in languages at Yale, Boston University and American University, Washington, D.C.

Studied in Italy

He taught English and Spanish in Wallingford, Conn., before going to Italy on a Fulbright scholarship in 1959. While in Italy, he was assistant director of the Cornell University-Fulbright Linguistic Program.

The Saigon assignment is Wells' first association with the USIA and with the Orient. He will succeed Dr. Ire Dell, a specialist in oriental religions and literature.

Wells said his assignment is a

routine personnel change, not connected with a reported impending shakeup of American officials there. "As far as I know," he said, they rotate the job I'm taking about every four years."

The reported shakeup involves policy conflicts between the U.S. State Department and the Central Intelligence Agency. John H. Richardson, CIA chief in Saigon, was recalled to Washington Saturday for consultation.

Due For Orientation

Wells will undergo orientation in Washington between now and December.

Accompanying him to Saigon will be his wife, Mary, night supervisor at City Hospital, and two of his three children.

Letitia, 20, and Gregory, 15, will go with their parents. Letitia, a sophomore at Clark University, will discontinue her studies there for a year, Wells said.

A second daughter, Florence, 13, a freshman at City Hospital School of Nursing will stay in Worcester.



WALTER E. WELLS
To South Viet Nam

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